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1917
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POEMS

By

Russell Meriwether Hughes

Poems

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Vedication

May your Life be ever happy,
May your star foreber shine,
May the sunshine flood your pathway,
May God bless you, Mother Aline.



JAN 29 1917

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No. 1.

Designed and Printed by
Passing Show Printing Company
San Antonio, Texas

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The Herald of Autumn

Along sweeps the truant North Wind
Swaying the browning grass;
It whirls the crisping autumn leaves,
A brilliantly colorful mass.

It sways the giant branches
Of the rough-barked oak tree tall.
It mourns o'er the death-bed of Summer
And heralds the coming Fall.

It hurries the leaden-colored clouds
Across the face of the sun.
It sighs to the birds in the tree-tops,
"Go Southward, every one."

It catches the last roses' petals
With a shrieking siren call,
And flings them on the grave of summer
And ushers in glowing Fall.

A Tropic Night

A tropic moon was riding
In a velvet tropic sky,
And the land was steeped in silence
Save for the wind's soft sigh.

And the palm trees raised their branches,
Whispering among themselves,
While the undergrowth it rustled,
Moved by feet of tropic elves.

And across the dark, still water
Diana cast a brilliant net,
Made from shifting, shimmering moonbeams,
Sparkling gems in silver set.

Then across the rippling water
Comes the Ukalele's hum,
While with music sweet and sighing
The shy maid is wooed and won.

And in answer to the strumming
The nightingale awakes,
And lifting up his golden voice
A flood of music makes.

And the gorgeous tropic flowers,
And the swaying tropic trees
Quiver with that glorious anthem,
Echoed by the summer breeze.

Soon the Ukalele's silent,
But the nightingale sings on
Till the moon sets, and the sky pales
With the glow of tropic dawn.

The Garden

There was a garden washed in dew
Where every kind of flower grew,
And in its midst a rose so fair
Who queened it in the garden there.

O'er the wall there crept a vine,
The truant, scarlet columbine;
And near it was the violet shy,
Where the dew drops love to lie.

On the edge of the gurgling brook
Grew those flowers that love to look
On their own sweet image there,
The white and gold Narcissus fair.

Over by the moss grown rocks
Stand the stately hollyhocks;
And near them grow the lillies pale,
Who on the air sweet breath exhale.

Scampering o'er the grass so green
The yellow dandelion is seen.
Near her plays the daffodil
Whose golden bell is never still.

And round-eyed daisies mingle there
With poppies, and with tuberos rare.
Where the cornflowers, heaven's hue,
Mingle with the harebells blue.

Where the honeysuckle clings
And to the breeze her perfume flings.
The trumpet flowers raise their heads
Close to the even tulip beds.

And o'er them all the oak tree bends,
And to the flowers a cool shade lends,
And round about the ivy clings,
And o'er his trunk a mantle flings.

All Summer long the flowers play
With never a tho't of a Winter day;
'Till all of a sudden the snowflakes come
And startle the flowers at their fun.

And the flowers list for the birds at dawn,
But the songsters all to the South have gone,
And the wind is cold, and the brook is dumb,
And the flowers are dying one by one.

The queen of the garden droops her head,
And the poppies die in their frozen bed.
And even the hardy goldenrod
Changes her gold for a soft gray hood.

The snowflakes cover the drooping flowers
And bid them wait for the summer hours.
The oak tree's branches are brown and bare
As he mourns for the death of the flowers
there.

But bye and bye the sun comes out,
And thru the snow comes a dark green
sprout,
And the flowers whom the snow had slain
Come out to begin their revels again.

Narcissus

Deep in the forest the nightingale
Summons the sprites of each woodland dale.
Smiling they come, and softly they play
'Till the sweet notes die. A lark heralds the
day.

Then in the forest a Shepherd lad
Meets with a maid in crinolin clad.
They dance together, but are frightened to
see

The nymphs approaching with their queen,
Clytie.

Around the pool the water-nymphs trip
With their clinging garments all a-drip;
And now with many a merry song
The unprisoned Dryads hasten along.
Wildly they dance the Bachannale
And fling the leaves to the Summer gale.
Laughing they roll on the soft, new grass
And over each other the leaves they mass.
Hark! A piercing note they hear
And now does Mercury appear
And tells of a fair youth's cruel death
'Til e'en the wild Dryads catch their breath.
Mercury goes, and over the hills
Comes gold-clad Diana. Her laughter fills
The valley. For look, in the wood she's
found

The handsome Narcissus. With laurels she's
crowned

His fair young brow. Ah, fickle boy,
E'en the fair Echo brings him no joy.

But he casts her off, new pleasures to find,
And leaves a broken heart behind.
But ah, beware, thou fair, vain youth.
It takes a mirror to tell thee truth,
For leaning over the limpid pool
The water to drink, his throat to cool,
He sees his own sweet image there,
The wondrous eyes and curling hair.
But look again. Ah, now he knows
That o'er no Nymph that water flows.
Sweet Echo watches him from the mount
While he dies at the edge of the playing
fount,
When, lo, he is gone, and in his place
A golden flower lifts its face.

The Dancer

(To Miss Grace McClannahan)

A rippling cadence of music
Like the chirp of the birds at dawn,
And in whirls a fairylike figure.
A chord; and the dance is on.

Her face is a-dimple with smiling,
Her hair is a-shine with curls.
You can almost hear her laughter
As she dips and curtsys and whirls.

A soft pink cloud is about her,
And her eyes mischievously glance.
The music goes faster and faster,
She's afire with the love of the dance.

A pause in the music. She poses,
Head thrown back, like a frightened fawn.
Another trill of music,
A flash of pink, and—she's gone.

She has charmed those breathless people,
And her presence lingers there
Like the odor of unseen roses,
Or of Orient perfume rare.

She has cast a spell about them,
The spell of her witching face;
Of her youth, and her joyful abandon,
The spell of her matchless grace.

Zingara

Her eyes were dark and the lashes
That swept her dark brown cheek
Were long, and veiled the flashes
Of eyes not bold, nor meek.

She stood on the street of the city
And the flowers in her hand
She sold to all the passers by
In that far, romantic land.

And then the Prince came riding,
Tall and dark was he;
He looked into her wondrous eyes,
Restless and deep as the sea.

He leaned from his milk-white charger
And touched her raven hair;
He took the rose from her trembling hand,
And he tho't her very fair.

And when the Prince had left her,
With a sigh like the coo of a dove,
Zingara returned to the Gypsy camp
To dream of her new-found love.

Then he came to that wild, bright Gypsy
camp,
And gave her a ring for a token,
(Ah, little they knew that in one short week,
Two hearts in that land would be broken!)

At night in the brilliant palace
When the hand he held was fair,
He tho't of wild, red roses
Asleep in dusky hair.

Alas for the pride of royalty,
For he must rule the nation,
Tho' she was the fairest of them all
She was below his station.

And so he said that they must part.
Then in her wild despair
She plunged a dagger in her heart
And stilled the tumult there.

And tho' he walks in his marble halls
With his stately head held high,
At night when the world is fast asleep
From his heart he breathes a sigh.

He smiles on the jeweled ladies,
But his heart within him cries
For the Gypsy maid, the dancer
With the dreamy, shadowy eyes.

For thus it has been since creation
The heart of maid and man,
Are mated for eternity
And sever them, nothing can.

The Eternal Feminine.

My Prince! He comes a-riding
To me from a far-off land.
His crimson plumes are waving
And his lance is at rest in his hand
I stand on my towered balcony,
And I strain my eyes to see
The flash of my lover's silver mail,
For I know he'll come back to me.

My Prince! He comes a-riding
From the bloody battle front,
And I see thru the trees a-gleaming
The blue and buff of his coat.
I stand on my pillared veranda,
And I pin a rose in my hair
So that, when my Captain comes to me,
He can not but think me fair.

My Prince! He comes a-riding
On his horse so snowy white.
He looks o'er his broad plantation
And the song on his lips is light.

My fingers droop o'er my sewing
As I list to the hum of the bees.
Ah! Methinks I hear a hoof ring out
'Neath the blooming locust trees.

My Prince! He comes a-driving
In his ninety horse-power car,
And I hear the purr of his motor
Flung by the breeze from afar.
I look from my modish apartment
Out on the crowded street,
'Till a flash of red darts thru the traffic,
And I turn, my lover to greet.

My Prince! He comes a-flying
In his humming mono-plane,
And I enter the elevator,
The hotel's roof to gain.

My Prince! I hear the 'phone bell.
"Wireless from Cadiz—
All right, connected," and I know
That, that dear voice is his!

The Call of the Tropics

Over the mountains and over the sea
The call of the tropics comes singing to me.

The call of the night; silver moon, velvet sky,
The call of the chase and the panther's wild
cry.

The call of the golden sand washed by the
waves.

Of the thousand of unknown and ancient
graves.

The call of the jungle aglow in its green,
With the vines and the trees, a mysterious
screen.

The call of the black native's wild tribal
song,
On the banks of the river that whispers
along.

The call of the heat-laden breeze, of the sun.
Of the stars when the long day's wild hunt-
ing is done.

Yes, over the mountains and over the sea,
The call of the tropics is singing to me.

Life's Tragedy

Life is not a tragedy
(Unless you make it so.)
Life's a vale of sunshine,
Not a vale of woe.

For behind each threatening cloud,
The golden sun is shining,
And around the rotten stump
The ivy green is twining.

In all of life's great tragedies,
Some good is always hid.
And so we must be patient
And do as we are bid.

And, as God's children, we will find
Good in our greatest sorrow,
And, finding it, will face more brave
That vast, unknown to-morrow.

Life is Not a tragedy
(Unless you make it so.)
For God's consolation follows you
Everywhere you go.

The Swan

(To D. M.)

'Twas a woody dell, all washed in dew,
And the golden sunlight filtered thru
The lace-like shelter of the trees,
Murmuring soft in the summer breeze.
The cool stream's mirror-like recess
Reflects the bower's loveliness.
Hark! O'er the quiet of the dying day
Comes a sad, sweet song, yet far away,
But coming nearer. A solemn strain,
Like a beautiful creature in mortal pain.
Then, down the stream, like a white-sailed
ship,
Comes the swan, with snowy wings a-drip
With the cool, green waters. It seeks the
bank,
For it's soft breast-feathers with blood are
dank;
A wound from the hunter's straying spear
Flung at the bronze back of a deer.
It flutters its wings in agony

With none but the whispering trees to see,
And it lifts its voice in its last sad song,
And it struggles with death, tho' it lives not
long.

Its life has been a beautiful dream,
Lived on the breast of the glassy stream.
That the dying swan it's life must give
For a careless hunter! Ah, but to live!
It struggles faintly with the spear in its side,
While its snowy feathers are crimson dyed;
And then, at the close of the summer's day
The wounded swan doth pass away.
Its bier is the moss, and its candles starlight,
And the trees and the moon keep watch thru
the night,
And He who knows where the sparrow has
gone,
Drops a tear for the death of the beautiful
swan.

Hidden Valley

The blood red sun sank down to rest,
And the soft-winged mocking bird sought its
nest,
And all was still, save the spring alone,
As it bubbled up in its Western Home.

Then into the silence 'twixt dark and day,
Came voices a-singing, light and gay.
A party of men on a pleasure quest,
Have sought the valley in which to rest.

“ ’Twas hard to find, tho’ I’m glad we came
To the Hidden Valley; appropriate name!”
The supper was merry, but soon ’twas done,
And the gentlemen smoking ere set of sun.

“Come, let us explore,” ’twas said, ’twas
done.

’Neath the old dried leaves was a rusty gun,
Four bullets were gone tho’ two were there
Cried the merry throng, “ ’Twas a bandit’s
lair.”

A few old cards inside a can.
A broken skillet. The skull of a man.
Some rotten rope in a little heap,
And the party wondered as they went to
sleep.

And as they slept, with tossing manes
Came the mustangs bearing knights of the
plains
From days gone by these spectres dim
Had come. The ghosts of plainsmen grim.

The cattle rustlers of ’84
Came back to view their stolen store,
Echoing thru Hidden Valley, they hear
The clashing horns of the spectre steer.

And the ghostly cowmen, they once more
Live over again the night of yore;
The poker game ’round the fire of camp,
They’re suddenly startled by the light of a
lamp.

They smother their fire, make ready their
guns,
As, stumbling forward, the stranger comes.
Blindly he walked into the "Rustler's Hat,"
And out of the darkness the first gun spat.

Four bullets he shot, and three went true,
Ere they stained his shirt with crimson hue;
And they mocked him there, tho' he lived
not long,
And then to their ears comes the night bird's
song.

But the bird is no ghost, and his gay sweet
trill
Awakes the echoes o'er the Valley still,
And the spectres all, they vanish away
And the eastern sky is streaked with gray.

And as the sun pushes over the hill
The sleepers awake from their mid-night
thrill;
They leave, and the bubbling spring alone
Murmurs the song of its Western Home.

The Gypsy

I was just a care-free, happy prince,
As gay as a bird; and as free,
'Till love it crept down into my heart
And made a man out of me.

It was not for the golden-haired Princess
Nor for lady of world-wide fame.
But 'twas for a dark-eyed Gypsy,
And Zingara was her name.

When my eyes they first beheld her
'Twas like a ray of light
Coming into the darkness,
'Tho I fought it with all my might.

But love is a winsome intruder,
And as strong as strong can be,
And when once he has entered,
'Tis useless to bid him to flee.

And all my world it wondered
At the change from a care free youth
To a sober and far-thinking man.
They little recked the truth.

For a smile from her rose-red lips
I would have given my crown.
I would have taken her where she stood
For all of her tattered gown.

For the touch of her hand and the sound of
her voice
I would face a hundred men.
Ah, that I could have lifted her up
To sit with my kith and kin.

With her dark and flashing eyes,
Unfaltering, unafraid,
With her proud and lofty carriage
What a queen she would have made!

And even now I can see her,
Tho' I know her spirit has fled,
See her sitting beside me
With a crown on her proud, dark head.

Ah, would that I could live over
That darksome, fatal eve
When I saw her dying before me
Tho' 'tis useless now to grieve.

For when she stood before me,
With Peter of old's same fears,
I denied my best, my only friend
For fear of the people's jeers.

O, 'tis useless to speak of duty
Of the pride of the royal line.
For I would give them every one
To take back those words of mine.

I never close my eyelids
But I see her raven hair,
The quiver of her ruby lips,
And her eyes, wide with despair.

And often, and very often
I see her with eyes downcast,
But more I see, her, reproach in her face,
As I looked upon her last.

I try to love my consort,
But my heart is in the grave
Where lies the Gypsy dancer,
For I, the King, am her slave.

And my people do not realize
That my heart hangs heavy within.
Heavy with my denial,
An unforgetful sin.

And my only hope on this earth
Is that she, and my God will forgive,
And that we may meet in that other land.
For this alone I live.

“His eye is on the sparrow.”
I hear the Bishop say.
“Remember, Love lives beyond the grave.”
Cries my heart, “So watch and pray.”

Kentucky

I have been to the far-off Northland,
Where the cruel glaciers creep.
Where the wer-wolf howls, and half the year
The land is wrapped in sleep.

I have been as far to the Southland,
Where the palms and the fig-trees grow.
Where the monkeys chatter above your head
And you never hear of snow.

I have been to the gayest cities,
I have climbed the mountains grim,
I have seen the broadest rivers,
And traveled the forests dim.

But a sunnier, cheerier, sweeter spot
In my travels I've yet to see,
Than a spot that lies in the old U. S.
The dearest spot to me.

'Tis there Spring's dress is the greenest,
Fairest Summer is more fair,
Autumn's treasures are the richest.
Frozen Winter's silver there.

And in among the ancient trees
The trumpet flower grows,
And the scarlet cardinal wings his way
Where the old Ohio flows.

Where the darkeys sit beneath the moon,
And all tune up and sing.
Where the folks still use good horse-flesh,
And the blue-grass comes with Spring.

Hospitality's the watch-word.
With all their hearts they love—and hate.
There the women are the fairest
In my old Kentucky State.

Far in the Sunny South

I.

There is a city wrapped in dreams,
Far in the sunny South,
And o're it golden sunlight streams,
Far in the sunny South.
It is a place where the palm-tree grows,

Whispering palms; where the Southwind
blows,
For Winter lightly her mist-veil throws,
Far in the sunny South.

II.

The missions are veiled in the dust of years,
Far in the sunny South,
And the plains are alive with long-horn
steers,
Far in the sunny South.
And winding thru the city fair
Is the silvery river. And here and there
Is a Senorita with dusky hair,
Far in the sunny South.

III.

This city is dancing with colors bright,
Far in the sunny South,
Which move in the sun and the pale moon-
light,
Far in the sunny South.
And the people there, they laugh alway,
For every day is a carnival day,
And every month is golden May,
Far in the sunny South.

Texas

I.

I'm going back to Texas,
Where the sky and prairie meet.

And the fertile land is measured off
By miles, and not by feet.
Where the mocking-birds and sparrows
Sing a merry roundelay,
And many a herd of cattle roam
The plains both night and day.

II.

I'm going back to Texas,
Where the sweet bluebonnets grow,
And breezes fan us always,
From the Gulf of Mexico.
Where the sun, it sets in glory,
And the creeping, purple night
Comes and stays 'till morn dispels it
With a blazing sword of light.

III.

I'm going back to Texas,
Where the nimble horned toad
Runs races with the rattler
Past the prairie-dog's abode.
Where the courtesy of Dixie
Blends with brav'ry of the West.
'Mong the states of our great country
Old Texas is the best!

Fame

What is Fame?
An elusive thing,
A bird forever upon the wing,
You see him not, but you hear him sing.
That is Fame.

What is Fame?
A twinkling star
That shines upon you from afar,
Reach it you can not; your content does it
mar.

That is Fame.

What is Fame?
A woman fair,
With ruby lips and golden hair,
Who comes not to you till death is there.
That is Fame.

The Soul

I.

A soul stood on the shores of Time,
Wrapped in enveloping gloom,
And the eyes of the soul watched for the
light
That it might read its doom.

II.

But it could not see, for the locks of greed
Hung over its weakened eyes,
Weakened by the love of self,
And failure to look at the skies.

III.

The people looked at the soul as it stood
And said, "It is lost, it is lost!
For it has every fault in the world."
And out with holy hands it they tossed.

IV.

And it raised its head, this impure soul,
As it stood alone on the sand,
And pushed from its eyes those loathsome
locks,
And Hope was the name of the hand.

V.

And bye and bye, thru the darksome gloom
Came a piercing ray of light,
Sent from crown on the brow of Faith,
A maid clothed in garments bright.

VI.

“Come!” cried the voice of the Saviour,
And the lone soul bowed its head.
But after awhile it lifted its eyes,
And lo! the gloom had fled.

VII.

A soul stood on the shores of Time
Wrapped in glorious white,
And it lifted its voice and sang the praise
Of the Prince of Love and Light.

The Song

I.

Long, long ago, to Earth was given
The Prince of Peace and Love;
And at His birth the angels came
And sang from the skies above.

II.

Out of the East the Wise Men came
Bringing Him presents of Gold,
And the very Angels of Heaven sang,
And the joyous story told.

III.

Even today we hear it,
On the Birthday of the King,
We hear it over the roar of guns,
And the martial bugle's ring.

IV.

The nations today, they hear it
As the Shepherds heard it then;
"Glory to God in the Highest,
Peace on Earth, good will toward men."

The Fall of Whiskey Pete and Silber Cy

Whut's that? Why yes, I am some sad.
Yu see it's jus' like this,
I've lived an awful careless life,
A kind of hit or miss.

Tell YOU whut makes me sad? Look here,
I jus' hates wimmen-folks!
Excuse me, ma'am, no harm tu yu!
(Gosh, I hope I chokes.)

Well, I got a right tu hate 'em,
Yu see it's them whut makes me sad.
Am I in love? Good-night, ma'am,
No, it ain't quite that bad.

As I wuz sayin', this careless life,
A-roamin' on th' plains,
Got me an' good ole Silver Cy,
Whiskey Pete an' young Jack Haynes.

We had always run together.
It wuz, "Cy an' Pete an' Joe."
Then Jack Haynes, he run with us
Mos' everywhere we'd go.

Jack wuz a han'some devil
Woman-hater from th' start,
'Till Sue Harlem got a bead on him,
An' won his dog-gone heart.

That left Cy an' Pete an' me
A-runnin' aloose right pert,
Still able tu rope a long-horn
An' bust a bronc with spur an' quirt.

You've heard of th' 101 Wild West?
Well, we needed a job right bad,
So when they called fer bronco busters
We took th' job an' wuz glad.

We'd been with th' outfit jus' one day
When Cy spied him a Wild West queen,
Th' nicest girl in th' outfit,
An' th' nicest girl Cy'd EVER seen.

If there's one thing Silver Cy can do,
It's ride an outlaw hoss,
So th' second day they brought him a brone
With a temper yu couldn't cross.

I never seed sech a bucker,
But Cy wuz gettin' 'long fine
When he spied th' darling of his heart,
A-watchin' him down th' line.

Sez he, "Now's my chance tu win her,"
An' he grabs th' saddle horn
Takes both his feet out o' th' stirrups
One buck an' Cy wuz gone!

O' course that hurt his pride a heap,
Tu say nothin' o' breakin' his arm,
But tho' he didn't show off just right,
He didn't do no harm.

'Cause when his arm got well,
He got a hoss an' showed her how
He'd ment to do that day.
Well, yu know girls—they're married now.

You're powerful sympathetic ma'am,
These biscuits is awful sweet.
You're nice tu take a interest in my woes.
O yes, about Whiskey Pete.

Well, after Silver got married,
We left th' Wild West Show.
Got a job on th' Bar S outfit,
Down by that town, Black Crow.

We'd been with that bunch quite a while,
'Til on th' fatal day
That we herded th' cattle into town,
An' Cupid started makin hay.

We wuz drivin' the cows in th' cattle cars,
When along come a bunch o' girls,
All frilly white dresses an' flowers
An' pink cheeks an' dimples an' curls.

Now cattle ain't used tu wimmen
An' when they seed them frills
They started a-runnin' aroun' th' corral,
An' yelled 'til they gave me chills.

We couldn't get them cows into th' cars
As long as th' girls would stay.
An' tho' they wuz takin' our pictures
We asked 'em tu go away.

Of course they wouldn't do it,
An' they treated us cold as ice.
Then Whiskey Pete lost his temper
An' th' things he said wasn't nice.

Well, that flow of Sunday School language
Would hev run th' devil off,
But one girl gave Pete th' once over
That made him blush an' cough.

Whiskey felt powerful rotten
An' apologized right pert
Tu the gal whut gave him th' haughty stare.
(Gosh, Kate wuz sho' a flirt!)

Course yu know whut happened.

She forgive him, an' more than that,
They got married. Dad Gum it—'Seuse me.
Cupid broke up our brotherhood pat.

Jack Haynes, Whiskey Pete an' ole Silver
Have got 'em a "Little gray home"
An' only me outer th' four of us
Is hittin' th' trail alone.

All four is powerful happy,
Which puts me tu thinkin' right smart,
I wonder if I'll ever fall in love
Or ain't I got a heart.

Gee, but yo' hans is small ma'am!
Say, mayent I call yu Jane?
Say-er-why can't we git married
Ef we do look like 'Texas an' Maine?

Altho' I wuz pretty wild, Jane,
I never wuz no crook,
An' I git pretty good wages.
Ooo, bu yu sure can cook.

Come on, gimme another one.
Well, I guess I've fell.
I figger most all of us do in time.
Gee, boys, ain't it hell?

Watermillion Time

O, I lubs de nice, cool Autumn
When de yaller pumpkins grow,
An' I lubs de freezin' Winter,
Wid de turkeys, an' de snow.
An' I 'preciate de Springtime
When we had de berries red.
But gimme good ole Summer,
When de sun shines on yo' head.
When yu' get out wid de niggers
An' pick de cotton white,
An' hear 'em all a-singin'
Fum early dawn 'til night.
An' after all day workin'
Cum home an' sit down on a stool
An' git sum juicy watermillion
All ripe, an' red, an' cool.
Jus' bury yo' face in it,
De way we darkeys do,
An' when you've tried it, you will say
You likes de Summer too.
O, I likes de lovely Springtime,
An' de Winter, an' de Fall,
But gimme good old Summer,
For it's de nicest one ob all!

On the War

Howdy do dar, Rastus.
Whut yo' speakin' on? De war?
Whut yo' know 'bout fightin', nigger?
Whut's de bigges fight yu've saw?

When Johnsing wuz de champeen?
Huh, dey don' fight lak dat,
Dey don' serap wid razors, nigger,
Dey use guns, yu bet yo' hat!
Why don' yu' read de papers, Rastus?
Pshaw, man, yu make me sick!
Now deres a picture ob a gun
As big as Roosevelt's big stick.
Why, in dis mawnin's Tribune
It says de Alleys got two feet.
Yu tho't mos' people had two laigs?
Shucks, you're crazy wid de heat!
Dat means dey got two feet ob groun'!
Tu plant potatoz on?
Dat means dey got mo' room tu fight,
Is all yo' brains plum gone?
Say, Rastus, read de papers,
Git yo' spees so yu' can see
An' when you've read for mos' a year
Then yu'll know as much as me!

The Harlem Twins

Hev' yu ever heard o' th' Harlem twins
Whut lives down by th' Rio Grande?
I tell yu' boys, they wuz th' prettiest gals
I ever shook by th' han'!

Tho' I ain't no han' with th' wimmen,
I'm a pretty good judge o' looks,
An' th' charms that them gals didn't hav'
Ain't writ in th' books.

They wuz so very much alike
Yu couldn't tell tother from which,
'Ceptin' thet one wuz steddy an' tame,
An' tother yu couldn't hitch.

Mary's eyes were as big an' deep
As th' night-time Texas skies.
Sue had dimples thet played in an' out
'Neath her laughin', devilish eyes.

They run th' ranch together,
Thet belonged tu their gouty dad.
An' me, an' th' boys thet wuz with me,
Says 'twas th' best job they'd ever had.

There wuz Silver Cy an' Whiskey Pete
An' Woman-hater Haynes.
Th' las' wuz th' handsomest feller
That ever rode th' plains.

We three had been together
Since we started punchin' steers,
An' th' Woman-hater'd been with us
For mighty nigh on to three years.

We didn't know nothin' about him
'Cept thet he sho' wuz a MAN,
Thet he hated anything wearin' skirts
An' could sho' play a poker han'!

Well, when we struck th' Harlem outfit
Mexico'd jus' begun,
An' before we'd been there quite six weeks,
They wuz makin' th' borderlan' hum!

Th' ole man tried tu make th' girls
Beat it fer San Antone,
But they, fer their very own reasons,
Informed him they'd stay tu hum.

It didn't take no microscope tu see
Thet from th' very start,
Sue took a likin' tu Jack Haynes,
An' wuz boun' tu win his heart.

Bein' a truthful fellow,
I wouldn't say Sue had no luck,
F'or before two months wuz past an' gone
Th' Woman-hater wuz struck.

Well, jus' in th' middle o' all o' this
Th' mussed up borderlan'
Got cluttered up with a lot o' men,
Sent down by Uncle Sam.

Greasers stayed 'way from Harlem's,
We wuz gettin' 'long alright,
With a soldiers' camp five miles away,
'Till hell broke loose one night.

We had ganged up in th' quarters
An' all th' work wuz done.
We'd played jus' one hand o' poker,
When we heard Sue Harlem's gun.

We were startled into silence
Then we heard a woman scream,
And About twenty Greaser guns spoke up
Like a Gatler lettin' off steam.

Now bein' an' old timer,
I got some quick get-away,
But Jack Haynes showed us all that night
That I had seen my day.

We saw when we got to th' ranch house
That their number doubled ours,
Says I, "Pete, tomorrow is May day,
But we won't be smellin' th' flowers."

We sent one of th' boys to th' soldiers' camp.
Say, those girls sure were game,
They wuz pickin' peons off that night
Like such to them wuz tame.

We fellows slipped in a window,
(Thank the Lord the night wuz black).
When Sue screamed from the second floor,
And we saw no more o' Jack.

We wuz knockin' 'em down right lively,
But ammunition wuz runnin' low
When a dirty galoot threw a lighted torch,
Say you should have seen that shack go!

Sue wuz a-cryin' on Jack Haynes' neck
Mary, a hot gun in her hand
Prayed, an' I tho't of all my sins,
Tho't, too, of th' Promised Land.

They say it just happens in movies,
But that house wuz jus' one blazin' hell
When Uncle Sam's soldiers, they come on a
run
An' we sent up a welcomin' yell.

The next was a doggone mix-up,
Jus' shots an' groans an' shrieks
'Till the moon set an' the stars went out
An' the East wuz full o' streaks.

Mary wuz shot sumthin' awful,
Cy left one finger in hock,
Jack Haynes wuz plugged thru th' shoulder,
So they called out th' young army Doc.

Well, we didn't have any more trouble,
But whut them darn Greasers did start
Wuz finished by that guy that shoots arrows,
That scoundrel that punctures your heart.

It wuzent so very long after,
Silver Cy, Whiskey Pete an' me,
Sat on our broncos in Mission,
An' somehow I couldn't see.

An' a somethin' rose up in my neck, boys,
An' I jus' couldn't swallow it down,
Tho' I hadn't no cause for sorrow
As I looked toward th' plains an' th' town.

Th' train disappeared round a curve,
With the Doctor and Mary on th' back
An' I looked toward th' house an' th' settin'
sun
Where two horses took Sue Haynes an'
Jack.

Come on, fellows, les' fill up another
An' drink tu' th' city an' plains!
I wonder which is the happier,
City Mary or Prairie Sue Haynes!

The Graduate

(To the '16 Class of M. S. G.)

The soft, sweet strains of the solemn march,
The odor of flowers fills the air
And out from the doorway's marble arch
Comes the sweet girl graduate fair.

Her step is stately, her head is high,
But the quirk of her lips is gay
And a laughing light in her eyes doth lie.
She is like a fair bouquet.

From the tip of her satin slippered toe
To the crown of her soft, fair hair
She is only a winsome girl. But lo!
A conquerer walks there.

Her fingers close on the calfskin roll
Tied with the green and gold,
And she faces about, for with all her soul
She wants to see what the world does hold.

And the graduate's eyes are dim with tears,
She is leaving school life behind.
But she smiles when she thinks (for she has
no fears),
Of what Life's School will find.

The Legendary Founding of the Alhambra of Tooba

Far to the East from whence Aton comes
On the banks of the Nile where the crocodile
suns

Stood the beautiful palace of Hassan-Al,
Where his daughters Shireen and Nourmehal
Danced their wonderful lives away;
Nourmehal, beautiful as the day,
Shireen, a lovely, sensitive flower.
Here, like a dream was their every hour.
There the Prophet gray and old
Taught them the wonderful Word of Gold,
Told them not of the Western man
Treading with hostile foot Egypt's sand.
And after their lesson was over and done,
He gave them his blessings, one by one,
And left them alone to dance and play
And laugh the rest of the golden day.
They unveil their faces, the Prophet is gone,
They call for a harp, and—the dance is on.

* * * *

The music is done and the dance is o'er
And the maidens reclining on the floor
When the movement in the air they feel,
Then they hear the shouts and the clashing
steel.

Shireen crouches close at her sister's side
And catches her veil, her features to hide.
A noise outside and in there hurls
A stalwart youth with wind-swept curls;
His blade is bare and his mein is bold,

His eyes are turquoise, his hair is gold,
He sheathes his blade and his cloak he
shakes

Ere a glancing look at the room he takes.
Then Nourmehal faces him unafraid
And he gasps in surprise at the lovely maid.
Then he doffs his cap and bows him low,
And with admiration his eyes do glow,
And he tells the lovely Nourmehal
Why he has made this sudden call.

“Ten of the Prophet’s retainers,” said he,
“Attacked me and my brother, we had to
flee.

I pray you lovely maids will forgive.
May I go? If they come, I’ve not long to
live.”

And she looked at this man with the hair of
gold

And Love awakened her sleeping soul.
“Come away,” cried the dusky Nourmehal,
“For I hear the steps of Hassan-Al.”

And she hid him away in darkest gloom
Ere the Prophet had entered the room.
And he asked them gruffly, his daughters
there

Of the man from the West, so tall and fair,
But Nourmehal shook her dusky head
And said the Englishman had fled.
The frightened Shireen spake not a word
She scarcely seemed as tho’ she had heard.
Then the noise of battle is heard without,
And “St. George for England,” they hear
the shout.

The Prophet's retainers all are slain
And the Prophet's palace e'en now is ta'en.
The noise comes nearer. Flung open's the
door,

And a hardy man strides across the floor.
Then the Prophet drops on his knees at his
feet.

Says the stranger, "Prophet, when we again
meet,

'Twill be in another world, not in this,
And simmering hot 'twill be, I wist."
And he lifts his sword to strike the blow
When frightened Shireen cries, O so low.

Just then he hears his brother's voice
Saying, "Come, John, take your choice,
'Twixt seeing this old Prophet bleed
And doing a mercy-loving deed."

John looks deep into Shireen's dark eyes,
And, "Let the Prophet live!" he cries.

The Prophet staggers to his feet
While Richard finds a downy seat.

"Tell me brother John," says he,
"How we gained the victory."

"Well, Richard, when you and I took to our
heels

With retainers pursuing with flashing steels
You escaped. I was caught. They'd begun
to boast

When along came England's armed host.

The retainers fled and we pursued
And led us the way to yon Prophet Good."

Richard laughed at his brother's tale,
Even Shireen smiled beneath her veil

And Prince John, catching the smile in her
eyes,

Quickly him to her side he hies.

“I, Crown Prince Richard, list Prophet
for lo,

Give to you and your daughters your liberty.

Go!”

Hassan-Al looks deep into Richard’s eyes,

“You have saved my life, O Prince,” he
cries,

“In the East when a man by another’s hand
lives

His most precious jewel to that man he gives.

Look Prince, in his gratitude Hassan-Al

Gives you his jewel, Nourmahal!”

Prince Richard looks on the lovely maid,

“And you?” “I shall do as my Father has
bade.”

“Prophet, I may not take your gift!”

Loud Hassan-Al his voice does lift

“England, your kindness shall not be for-
got.”

But his beautiful daughter thanks him not.

“Come, my daughters, happy we go.”

But Shireen leaves John’s side very slow

And her sister looks back at England’s
Prince

And his eyes are saying, “Go not hence!”

Then Nourmehal turned, and going back

Looked into his eyes with hers of black,

“I go not for I love you, sire,” she said.

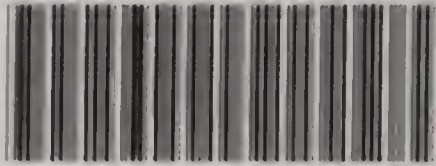
(How high she held her shapely head.)

Into Richard’s eyes there crept a light,

“You shall be queen of England’s might.”
He takes her hand, “Be not afraid
Because I love you, dusky maid.
England’s Prince with you shall wed
And England’s crown shall grace your head.
Ho, Prophet, go you to my train
And call a priest to marry us twain.”
Hassan-Al bows low to the Prince and is
gone.

“Make it a double wedding!” cries John.
Murmurs the Prince to his dusky bride
The daughter of Egypt, its boast and pride,
“Maiden that we be not forgot,
Let us build a temple upon this spot;
A temple to our happiness
And fill it with Egypt’s loveliest,
And let it last forever and aye,
'Till the earth shall mold and crumble away.
We will call this temple 'neath Creshna’s
star,
The Temple Alhambra of Tooba.”

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